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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/632,006	07/31/2003	Jeffrey L. Maichel	1344	2295

7590 02/23/2005

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EXAMINER

LEE, KEVIN L

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3753

DATE MAILED: 02/23/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/632,006

Applicant(s)

MAICHEL ET AL.

Examiner

KEVIN L LEE

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-31 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2 and 9-19 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 3-8 and 20-31 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 31 July 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 7/31/2003.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_.

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Claim Objections***

Claims 4 and 23 are objected to because of the following informalities: In claims 4 and 23, the recitation of "of the valve body with sealing member" is awkwardly stated. It is believed that "a" should be inserted prior to "sealing member" to provide for proper antecedent basis. Appropriate correction is required.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The apparatus claim 16 is improperly dependent upon a method claim.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1, 2 and 9-17 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sato et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,470,907). The patent to Sato et al discloses in Figures 23-25 a method and apparatus for installing a valve-stopping mechanism (8A) within an opening-defining portion of the valve body, the opening-defining portion being readable as the opening between the flange portion (122b). A connection-facilitating means (174, 173) is disposed on the flange portion (122b). The connection-facilitating means (174, 173) includes a separate isolation valve (173) which is illustrated in the closed position in Figure 23 and in the open position in Figure 24, wherein the valve-stopping mechanism (8a) is movable from the upper section (174) of the connection-facilitating means (174), past the opening defining portion and into the hollow valve body interior (12B), see col. 18, lines 5-33. The apparatus and method taught therein applies to inserting the valve (8A) into position. It would have been an obvious reversal of steps to use the connection-facilitating means (174, 173) to remove an installed valve (8A) for purposes of inspection, repair or replacement. In particular regard to claim 15, with the valve-stopping mechanism (8A) removed from the hollow valve body interior as illustrated in Figure 23, the hollow valve body interior is accessible for cleaning. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to clean the hollow interior prior to installing the valve-stopping mechanism.

Claim 18 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sato et al in view of Yano (U.S. Patent No. 3,948,282). The connection-facilitating means (173) lacks being connected to the flange (122b) with a bolt. The patent to Yano teaches the

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above exception in providing a bolt (47) to watertight couple a connection-facilitating means (4) to a flange (3), col. 4, lines 24-36. In view of the teaching of Yano, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at time of the invention to modify the valve assembly of Sato et al to include a bolt to tightly and removably couple the connection-facilitating means to the flange.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

Claims 3-8 and 20-31 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to KEVIN L LEE whose telephone number is (571) 272-4915. The examiner can normally be reached on MONDAY-THURSDAY.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, GENE MANCENE can be reached on (571) 272-4930. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

FEBRUARY 14, 2005

  
**Kevin Lee**  
Primary Examiner